

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW UNN
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 STOCKHOLM 1542

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MPOL, SW
SUBJECT: SWEDISH DISCUSSION OF DEFENSES AGAINST CHEMICAL-
BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS ATTACKS

1. SYDSVENSKA DAGBLADET, AN INDEPENDENT DAILY PUBLISHED IN
MALMO, PUBLISHED ON MARCH 26 ONE OF THE VERY FEW ARTICLES ON
SWEDISH DEFENSE AGAINST POTENTIAL CHEMICAL-BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS
ATTACKS TO APPEAR IN THE SWEDISH PRESS. ENTITLED "SOVIETS
WORKING ON TOXIC WEAPONS," THE ARTICLE FOLLOWS BELOW IN
ENGLISH TRANSLATION. EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT COPY OF THIS
CABLE BE FORWARDED TO STUART KINGMAN, ASSISTANT TO THE
DIRECTOR FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CENTER,
ATLANTA.

2. BEGIN TEXT:
CAN SWEDEN DEFEND HERSELF EFFECTIVELY AGAINST BIOLOGICAL-
CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN THE EVENT OF A WAR? NO, SAY DEFENSE EXPERTS,
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THERE IS NO COMPLETE PROTECTION AGAINST MANY DIFFERENT
BC WEAPONS. THIS QUESTION HAS ARISEN AFTER AN ALARMING
REPORT FROM NATO WHICH CLAIMS THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS
CONCENTRATING ON TOXIC WEAPONS AND IS, AMONG OTHER THINGS,
CULTIVATING FATAL VIRUSES. THE BC DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS
IN THE WEST ARE SAID TO BE SO INADEQUATE THAT WE
SHOULD HAVE TO RECKON WITH 80 PERCENT FATALITY AFTER A C-

WEAPONS ATTACK.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL GUNNAR GUSTAFSSON, CIVIL DEFENSE BOARD (CD):
WE ARE BETTER EQUIPPED TO COPE WITH A NUCLEAR ATTACK THAN
A BC ATTACK. NOW WE MUST MAKE A SERIOUS STUDY OF CHEMICAL
WEAPON DANGERS. THE CD AND FOA (SWEDISH DEFENSE RESEARCH
INSTITUTE) HAVE HELD A JOINT SYMPOSIUM WHICH INCLUDED
REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DEFENSE STAFF AND INDUSTRY. HERE
WEAK POINTS IN THE NATION'S DEFENSES AGAINST C WEAPONS WERE
DISCUSSED IN DETAIL. THE FINDINGS ARE EXPECTED TO BE PRESENTED
WITHIN A YEAR.

GUSTAFSSON CONTINUES: IT IS DIFFICULT TO REMEDY THE
SHORTCOMINGS WE HAVE DISCOVERED, EVEN IF WE GIVE PRIORITY
TO PROTECTION AGAINST CHEMICAL RISKS IN PEACETIME TOO.
WE ARE ALSO WORKING TO SOME EXTENT ON PROTECTION AGAINST
B WEAPONS.

DEFENSE STAFF INFORMATION CHIEF LT. COL. BENGT WIKANDER:
MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE REASONABLY WELL TRAINED AGAINST ABC
WEAPONS. AMONG OTHER THINGS, CONSCRIPTED MEN ARE INSTRUCTED
DURING BASIC TRAINING IN HOW TO INJECT THEMSELVES AGAINST
NERVE GASES.

IN THAT RESPECT THE MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE SOMEWHAT
BETTER OFF, ALTHOUGH THIS PARTICULAR SORT OF TRAINING
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DIMINISHED WHEN THE DURATION OF THE BASIC TRAINING PERIOD
FOR CONSCRIPTED MEN WAS REDUCED. WE HAD TO MAKE A CHOICE
THEN, SAYS WIKANDER, AND WERE COMPELLED TO GIVE PRIORITY
TO COMBAT TRAINING.

BOTH THE MILITARY AND CD AUTHORITIES ARE WELL AWARE
OF WHAT THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THESE TERRIBLE NEW BC
WEAPONS CAN MEAN FOR SWEDEN. FOA IN PARTICULAR HAS BEEN
WORKING ON PROTECTIVE MEASURES AGAINST NEW WEAPONS FOR
THE PAST 40 YEARS. BUT A LOT MORE MONEY IS NEEDED FOR
THIS TYPE OF RESEARCH AND PROBABLY STILL MORE IN ORDER TO
TRANSFORM THE RESEARCH RESULTS INTO PRACTICAL PROTECTIVE
MEASURES.

TOO EXPENSIVE
THE NEW SWEDISH-MADE PROTECTIVE MASK IS ONE EXAMPLE.
THIS IS EFFECTIVE AGAINST VARIOUS KNOWN COMBAT GASES
(THOUGH NOT AGAINST CARBON MONOXIDE) AND IS ALSO SUPPOSED
TO PROVIDE PROTECTION AGAINST AIRBORNE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS
AND RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT. BUT TODAY AND FOR THE FORESEEABLE
FUTURE AS WELL, THESE MASKS WILL BE AVAILABLE ONLY
TO A MINOR PROPORTION OF THE SWEDISH POPULATION. IT IS

CONSIDERED TOO EXPENSIVE AN UNDERTAKING TO PROVIDE THEM
FOR EVERYONE.

THE GERMANS MADE THE FIRST GAS ATTACK, WITH TERRIBLE
EFFECT, ON THE WESTERN FRONT IN 1915, AND DURING WORLD WAR II
HITLER COULD PROBABLY HAVE PUT A SWIFT END TO THE
NORMANDY INVASION BY MEANS OF A NEW TERROR WEAPON--
NERVE GAS. BUT IT WAS FELT THAT THE RISK OF ALLIED
RETALIATION WAS ALTHOUGHTER TOO GREAT. IT IS STILL FELT
TODAY THAT IMPROVED NERVE GASES AND PERFORMANCE-REDUCING
WEAPONS--CHIEFLY PSYCHO-CHEMICAL--ARE AMONG THE MOST
DANGEROUS ELEMENTS IN THE MAJOR POWERS' POISON ARESENALS.
A DROP OF TABUN NERVE GAS THE SIZE OF A PINHEAD CAN KILL
A PERSON WITHIN 3-6 MINUTES.
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BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS WHICH STRIKE DOWN THE ENEMY WITH
INFECTIOUS DISEASES ARE NOTHING NEW. IT IS SAID THAT WHEN
THE SWEDES BELEAGURED REVAL IN 1710 THEY WERE STRIKEN BY
A PLAGUE EPIDEMIC WHEN THE RUSSIANS "BOMBARDED" THEM
WITH PLAGUE-INFESTED CORPSES. NOWADAYS, OF COURSE, THERE
IS A MUCH WIDER VARIETY OF B WEAPONS, INCLUDING APOPLEXY,
SMALLPOX, YELLOW FEVER, AND DIPHTHERIA-INDUCING VIRUSES,
PLUS THREE NEW DISEASES WHICH THE SOVIET UNION IS BELIEVED
TO HAVE ADDED TO HER POISON STORE. THESE ARE "LASSA FEVER,"
"FEBOLA FEVER" AND MARBURG SICKNESS," ALL WITH A VERY
HIGH MORTALITY RATE.

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ANXIETY IN THE WEST

THE THING THAT WORRIES THE WEST IS THE SOVIET UNION'S ENORMOUS STORES OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS AND MOSCOW'S GROWING INTEREST IN BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS. UNLIKE THE NATO FORCES, THE GREATER PART OF THE SOVIET TROOPS IN EUROPE IS TRAINED IN BC WARFARE, A FACT WHICH ALARMS THE NATO COMMAND EVEN MORE.

BC WEAPONS CAN BE SPREAD BY BOMBS AND MISSILES AND FROM LAND VEHICLES, AIRCRAFT AND SHIPS. THEY CAN BE DISTRIBUTED OVER VERY LARGE AREAS IN THE FORM OF AEROSOL; SMALL AIRBORNE PARTICLES THAT FLOAT ABOUT IN THE AIR FOR A LONG TIME, GRADUALLY PENETRATING UNIFORM CLOTH, POROUS WALL STRUCTURES AND CRACKS AND FISSURES.

HITHERTO IT HAS BEEN APPRECIATED THAT BC WEAPONS CAN WELL HAVE A BOOMERANG EFFECT. BUT WITH IMPROVED UNCLASSIFIED

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ATTACK METHODS AND AN INADEQUATE PROTECTION STANDARD AMONG THE ENEMY THERE IS, OF COURSE, A GREAT TEMPTATION TO RESORT TO THIS CHEAP, PARALYZING WEAPON. MEANWHILE, DEFENSE EXPERTS CONSIDER THAT ALTHOUGH THE IDEA OF BC WARFARE CANNOT BE RULED OUT ALTOGETHER, IT IS NEVERTHELESS HARDLY PROBABLY FOR THE MOMENT.

DOCENT JOHAN SANTESSON, RESEARCH HEAD OF FOA'S CHEMICAL SECTION, CONSIDERES THAT SWEDEN'S PROTECTION FOR CIVILIANS AGAINST C WEAPONS IS AMONG THE BEST IN THE WORLD. SWEDISH SHELTERS ARE EQUIPPED WITH FILTERED VENTILATION, AND WHERE SUCH SHELTERS ARE NOT AVAILABLE THERE ARE SUFFICIENT PROTECTIVE MASKS.

SANTESSON: THE INITIAL C ATTACK WOULD HAVE UNPLEASANT CONSEQUENCES, IRRESPECTIVE OF HOW WELL PREPARED ONE MIGHT BE. THIS MEANS THAT EVERY ATTACK BY THE ENEMY SHOULD BE REGARDED AS A POSSIBLE C WEAPONS ATTACK AND THE DUE PROTECTIVE PRECAUTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN.

TO SURVIVE NERVE GASES, ONE NEEDS SOME FORM OF

RAIN CAPE. IF A SWEDISH SOLDIER GETS A DROP ON HIS SKIN HE CAN SAVE HIMSELF BY TAKING AN INJECTION, BUT CIVILIANS SHOULD NOT BE FURNISHED WITH THESE HYPODERMICS, SAYS SANTESSON, SINCE TRAINING AND PRACTICE IS NEEDED TO USE THEM PROPERLY.

SANTESSON STRESSES THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENT IN BC WEAPON PROTECTION IS TRAINING, BOTH MILITARY AND CIVILIAN. WITHOUT THIS TRAINING THERE IS A DANGER OF PANIC IN A CRITICAL SITUATION AND THAT WOULD ONLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE.

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SENIOR ENGINEER AKE BOVALIUS, HEAD OF FOA'S BIOLOGICAL SECTION, BELIEVES THAT MINOR BIOLOGICAL ATTACKS OF A DISGUISED NATURE CAN OCCUR, DESPITE THE INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS. SABOTAGE-TYPE B WEAPON ATTACKS CAN BE MADE WITHOUT IT BEING POSSIBLE TO PRODUCE EVIDENCE.

BOVALIUS: THE FOUNDATION OF OUR PROTECTION AGAINST B WEAPONS IS OUR OVERALL MEDICAL CARE ORGANIZATION. WE HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING A HIGHLY DEVELOPED COUNTRY TECHNOLOGY-WISE, AND WITH A HIGH STANDARD OF HYGIENE. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE THAT SPREADS NATURALLY AND ONE THAT IS SPREAD BY MEANS OF A B WEAPON ATTACK IS SURELY FIRST AND FOREMOST A QUANTITATIVE QUESTION.

BUT BOVALIUS ALSO POINTS OUT THAT THIS INVOLVES A VERY LARGE AREA WHERE THE LIMITED RESOURCES WOULD BE SUFFICIENT ONLY FOR COUNTER-MEASURES AT CERTAIN POINTS. BEYOND THAT THE SWEDISH PEOPLE MUST PUT THEIR FAITH IN THE FUTURE ADVANCES OF MEDICAL RESEARCH.

MAP LEGEND

THIS IS HOW A POISON ATTACK CAN AFFLICT SWEDEN: A SHIP MOVING PARALLEL WITH THE COAST DISTRIBUTES 200 KILOGRAMS OF HIGHLY VIRULENT INFECTIOUS MATTER IN AEROSOL FORM. WITHIN AN AREA OF SOME 90,000 SQ. KILOMETERS THE ATMOSPHERE WILL THEN CONTAIN AT LEAST ONE PARTICLE PER LITER OF AIR. UNLESS PROTECTIVE MEASURES ARE TAKEN ALL THE INHABITANTS IN THIS AREA CAN ABSORB AN INFECTIOUS DOSE. END TEXT
KENNEDY-MINOTT

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